metro

FIND YOUR DREAM HOME IN JUST THE RIGHT PLACE

A Special Report by Star Metro Media

NEW HOMES
Edmonton

ISTOCK

Building communities for families

ROHIT LAND DEVELOPMENT

Finding a place where you feel right at home

Stephanie Orford

Your home should be more than just the sum of its building materials. It should be a place you feel at home in your community.

That's the philosophy behind Rohit Land Development, a family-based company that now has three communities across Edmonton where prospective homebuyers can find exactly that — beautiful homes within a rich sense of neighbourhood.

"We focus on making sure that we're providing the customer with what they need to feel like they live in a wholesome neighbourhood," says Kalina Davidiuk, marketing manager for Rohit Land Development. "We want to make sure we build neighbourhoods that aren't just houses, but that we create homes and communities with a sense of belonging."

Where you belong in Edmonton depends on your personality, interests and needs. Each of Rohit's three developments across the city offers something different.

Timberidge at Edgemont is a 40-acre project by Rohit Land Development in Edmonton's west end, offering a range of homes by three different builders.

"Timberidge is one of the only new West End communities selling new homes right now," says Davidiuk.

The development offers easy access to the city via arterial roads nearby, and it's a short drive from West Edmonton Mall, as well as many golf courses, schools and other amenities. Yet it's "still quiet and tucked away," says Davidiuk.

Northwest is the home of nature-oriented development Starling at Big Lake. It's a community that's "focused on city living with a country feel," says Davidiuk.

Starling abides by architectural and building standards that help preserve the development's natural environment, including LED lights, stormwater ponds, and other environmental considerations.

If you're a nature lover, this may be the neighbourhood for you.

Meanwhile, Rohit Land Development's Southwest community, called Glenridding Heights, is an amenities-focused development that offers incredible convenience.

It's great for families who are always on the go. The development is located just down the street from shopping destination Currents of Windermere, and incorporates a family-friendly four-season park within the development.

"We want to focus on not just where to live, but how to live," Davidiuk says.

If you're a nature lover, Starling at Big Lake may be the neighbourhood for you. CONTRIBUTED

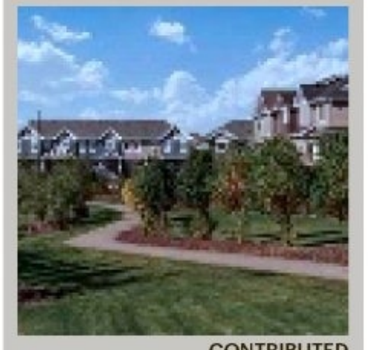
Housing trends in Edmonton

With an affordable housing market and historically low mortgage interest rates, now is a great time for prospective home buyers to get into the Edmonton housing market.

There were 1,879 home sales in Edmonton this April, according to a report by the Alberta Real Estate Association. That's an 8.8 per cent jump from April 2016.

And the total value of home sales in Edmonton increased by 12.7 per cent compared to the previous year.

These numbers may mean that the Alberta economy is on the upswing and Edmontonians are starting to buy again. It may be just the right time to find a beautiful home in Edmonton at an affordable price.



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STREETSIDE DEVELOPMENTS

Lay back and relax in your backyard

The backyard has become a booming business as more focus has been put on extending a home's living space outside. Furniture, lighting, planters, outdoor area rugs and cooking accessories have flooded the market, giving homeowners plenty of choices to make backyards more inviting. Here are five things that can make your outdoor space a more welcoming place to be

Karen Durrie

Play outdoors

Playing outside is one of summer's greatest pleasures when you're a kid. It's even better when you've got an awesome play structure right in your own backyard. The Big Backyard Sunview wooden play centre has plenty of play value, with swings, rock climbing, a wave slide, shaded play deck and a sandbox. The cedar structure is pre-cut, drilled and stained with child-safe resin. About $500 at Canadian Tire.

Fuel your summer fun

Toast your friends around a cozy fire pit on a starlit night with one of the many portable choices to be found in home and garden centres. From sleek, urban metal designs to rustic stone, fire pits come in myriad types, fueled by wood, liquid propane or natural gas. The Canyon Ridge model has a low-profile design with a granite tabletop and stainless burner. Includes lava rocks, and can be converted to natural gas. Find it at Lowes for $599.

Cool down

Can you get more Canadian than sitting around having a few frosty brews outside on a hot day? Sure can — if you're storing them in a remote-control Zamboni-style cooler. It holds up to 30 cans, has built-in bluetooth speakers for tune crankage, LED lights on the front to light the way in the dark, a USB port for charging devices, and two cupholders. The cooler's remote operates music, lights and speed from a 100-foot range. $399.95 online at hammacher.com

Enjoy outdoor comfort

Nothing makes your outdoor space feel like a real living space than the same comforts you find indoors. Bright and weather-resistant area rugs and cushioned furniture make curling up with a book or settling in with a glass of wine feel like fresh-air luxury. Ikea has a range of colourful outdoor accessories that provide a pop of colour to your space. We like the funky geometric print of the Grenö pillow, with removable, washable cover. $9.99 at Ikea.

Sleep in the sun

Patio furniture can make or break your outdoor living experience. Luckily there are more choices than ever, and lots of clever, comfortable pieces that can build great conversation areas or help you create the ultimate outdoor oasis. Consider an outdoor patio daybed to curl up with a book or canoodle with your boo. The Convene outdoor patio daybed comes with a canopy to shade you from the sun, and comfortable cushions in an array of colours. $1,840 on wayfair.ca.

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Edmonton metro

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Alberta Wildrose Leader Brian Jean and Alberta PC Leader Jason Kenney in Edmonton on Thursday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

High school shortage may need tax hike fix

EDUCATION

Group says it's necessary; board floats other ideas

Kevin Maimann
Metro | Edmonton

An Alberta group is calling for higher taxes to solve a looming high school shortage in Edmonton.

"If we don't fix the tax revenue situation in the next two to three years, we're going to have to start considering some pretty radical changes to how we provide public services, and they won't be things that people like," said Public Interest Alberta executive director Joel French.

French said if Albertans want to keep up with high school construction, our government will have to look at a sales tax or higher income taxes to finance more schools.

The Edmonton Public School District projects in its 2018-21 capital plan that the number of students will likely exceed available school space by the 2021–22 school year, and the district will peak at 30,000 students around 2025.

That will require 8,000 more spaces, with the biggest crunch on the far south side.

The school board's top priority is a Heritage Valley school that would hold 2,400 students and cost close to $90 million.

But Edmonton Public will need at least five new high schools to meet its projected needs, and none of them have been approved for funding yet.

Board chair Michelle Draper said several ideas are being floated to deal with the lack of space — including having some students take classes in evenings, offering more courses online and throughout the summer, and having more students travel from school to school for different classes.

Draper said students will not be forced into any of those options, however.

"It's our top priority to get new schools built, absolutely. Are there other ways? That's what we're exploring," she said.

Education Minister David Eggen said the province is committed to building as many schools as needed.

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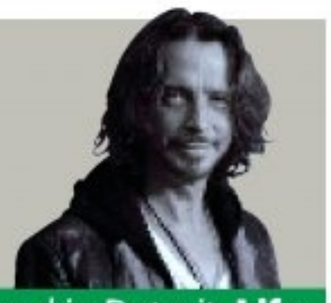

Chris Cornell, lead singer for Soundgarden and Audioslave, found dead in Detroit. **Life**

An online archive showcases local hand-painted ads for old stores and services, like these two examples. KEVIN TUONG/FOR METRO

The writing is on the wall

CULTURE

And online, too, thanks to this ghost sign aficionado

Sarah Hoyles
For Metro | Edmonton

Edmonton's historic ghost signs are getting new life online.

Luba Romanko is the Edmontonian behind a new online archive called Hunting for Ghost Signs, which shows off some of the best-known local examples of the hand-painted messages that once advertised stores and services in the city.

"It is our history. It is the history of the working class people in Edmonton. We need to keep this history with us," she said.

Once the primary mode of advertising, all of the signs were painted by hand in the early- to mid-1900s by painters known as wall dogs. Tucked away down alleyways and on the sides of old buildings, they promote everything from cigars and coffee to hotels and sportswear.

But after decades of exposure to the sun, snow and rain most of the remaining examples are fading fast, hence the nickname.

Romanko started tracking down Edmonton's remaining ghost signs last fall. She started taking photos of them and digging up whatever information she could at local archives, and the buildings they're painted on.

> **We need to keep this history with us.**
> Luba Romanko

One of the signs features is on the Union Bank Building along Jasper Avenue between 100 and 101 Street, and advertises the James Richardson and Sons Company, that shipped Canadian grain overseas starting in 1883.

Romanko starting sharing what she'd discovered with friends on Facebook, but soon realized there was wider interest in the project. Since she started the website more than 2,000 have visited.

David Johnston, the city's principal heritage planner, said the city wants to create its own inventory of the ghost signs.

"It's something we want to undertake. We've never done one before," he said, adding that the city tracks historic buildings, but not the signs on them.

Still, just listing the signs isn't the same as protecting them — historic designation is a whole different process — so that's still something the city would have to think about, he added.

In the meantime, Romanko plans to keep building her website because, "it's not just buildings," she said.

"It's history and we need to be proud of it."

Luba Romanko takes pictures of ghost signs. KEVIN TUONG/METRO

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Wildrose, PCs agree to merge

POLITICS

Party members must approve merger before it goes ahead

Jeremy Simes
Metro | Edmonton

Meet your new "United Conservative Party," Alberta.

Wildrose Leader Brian Jean and Progressive Conservative Leader Jason Kenney announced Thursday they've struck a tentative deal to merge.

The deal still has to be approved by 75 per cent of Wildrose members and just over 50 per cent of PC members. If it goes ahead, the new party will set up a leadership committee with an eye to electing a new leader by Oct. 28

"The members will always be in the driver's seat," Jean told reporters Thursday. "They are the guiding compass of our party."

The agreement is more than just about "uniting the right," Kenney added.

"It's about re-creating a broad, tolerant, free-enterprise coalition," he said. "This is a great day, a historic day in Alberta."

The unification also sets a path "to gain control of our province now and for future generations," Jean added.

Kenney also took aim at the Alberta NDP, as unity "ensures defeat for the disastrous" government.

"Help is on the way and hope is on the horizon," Kenney said. "I'm advocating a yes vote but I welcome serious debate."

Alberta Wildrose leader Brian Jean, left, and Alberta PC leader Jason Kenney announce a unity deal in Edmonton on Thursday. JASON FRANSON/ THE CANADIAN PRESS

In response, Premier Rachel Notley said her party is focused on steering the province through the current downturn rather than making huge cuts to government programs, including health care and education, "to fund tax breaks for the top one per cent."

"That is not a path to recovery," she said. "I'm happy to have that debate with one right-wing party or 10 right-wing parties. It doesn't really matter. I'm confident that our choice to stand with Albertans is the right one."

If an agreement is passed, a joint party convention would be required as well as a leadership race.

The referendum for member support will be held in late July, and both leaders have said they plan to run as leader for the united party.

If members vote against a merger, both parties will work out a "non-competition agreement," Kenney said. Details on what that would look like haven't been released.

The name United Conservative Party will also likely change, Jean added, noting the current name was considered practical by the Chief Electoral Officer.

Both leaders said they would scrap the carbon tax and reduce taxes if elected premier.

WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

LEGISLATION

Appeal Court strikes down part of impaired driving law

Alberta's highest court has struck down part of the province's impaired driving legislation.

The law allows authorities to take away the licence of a suspected drunk driver until the case is resolved in court.

The Court of Appeal says taking away the licences of drivers who haven't been found guilty violates their charter rights.

Lawyer Nate Whitling had argued that a driver awaiting trial has to do without a licence for well past three or six months because of a backlog in the courts.

He said that means some plead guilty just to get things over with.

The ruling puts everything on hold for a year, so nothing will change for now.

It's expected the province will either appeal the ruling to the Supreme Court of Canada or rewrite the law.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

CRIME

Human remains found in burned trailer

Mounties are investigating after human remains were found in a burned holiday trailer in northwestern Alberta.

Peace Regional RCMP says the remains were found Wednesday on Reno Road, about 40 kilometres southeast of Peace River.

Members from the RCMP's major crimes unit and provincial fire investigators also are involved in the investigation.

An autopsy is scheduled for Friday in Edmonton.

RCMP would like to hear from anyone who may have seen or heard anything unusual or suspicious in the area between Monday and Wednesday.

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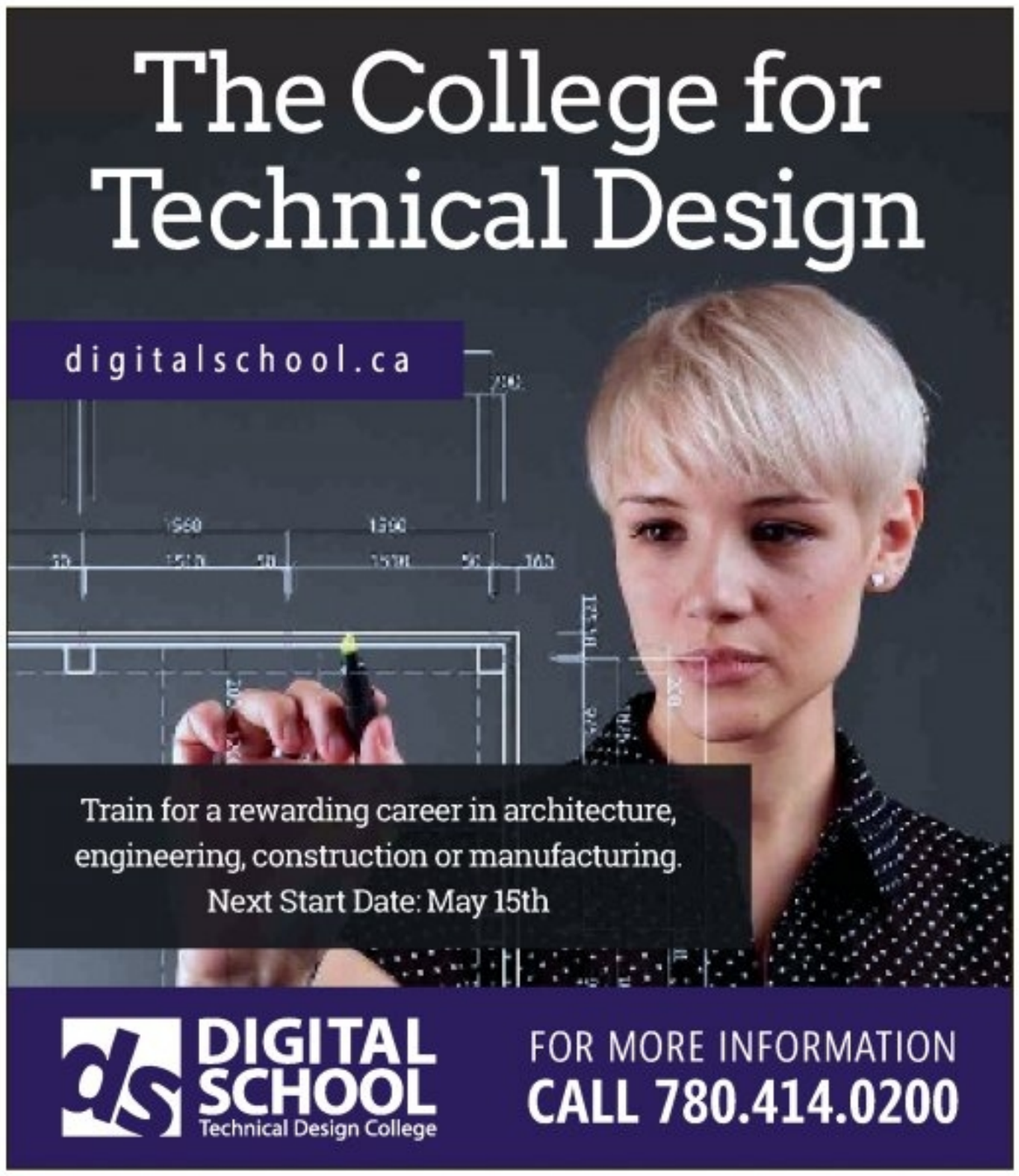
IN BRIEF

Canada-wide warrants issued for car thieves
Police in Edmonton have issued Canada-wide warrants for two women allegedly involved in a national auto-theft ring targeting luxury vehicles. Investigators say thieves used stolen or fraudulent identification to apply online to buy the cars and came from out of province to pick them up.
Gene Nikota, 45, faces several charges, including fraud and possession of stolen property. Kimberly Barlow, 38, and Jennifer Callihoo, 33, are wanted for a total of 40 offences.
THE CANADIAN PRESS



Advocate criticizes ATV law as too lax

SAFETY

Don Voaklander says riders still in danger with legislation

Kevin Maimann
Metro | Edmonton

A new helmet law won't be enough to keep all-terrain vehicle riders safe on May long weekend, according to the director of the University of Alberta's Injury Prevention Centre.

Don Voaklander says 16 Albertans die in ATV accidents every year.

Helmet laws tend to cut fatalities in half, he said, but because of several exemptions in Alberta's legislation — which came into effect Monday — he only expects "two or three lives" will be saved.

His biggest concern is the exemption for side-by-side ATVs with rollover protection and seatbelts, particularly because children sometimes ride in them despite the belts being made for adults.

"We've already seen a few fatalities where children have slipped out of the seatbelt, outside of the vehicle, and have been crushed," Voaklander said.

"So we're quite disappointed that they've been excluded from the helmet legislation."

Voaklander said people should never bring passengers on ATVs built for one person.

Bill 36, which was introduced last December, means anyone driving, riding in, or being towed by an off-highway vehicle (including dirt bikes, motorcycles, mini bikes, ATVs and snowmobiles) can now face a $155 fine for not wearing a helmet.

Exemptions are made for anyone who is on their own property, performing farm or ranch work, on a First Nations reserve or Metis settlement, or a Sikh wearing a turban.

May long weekend often sees quad-related fatalities, being the first time many riders take the vehicles out for the year.

Voaklander also said booze is a factor in more than half of ATV deaths.

"It's a big problem. If I was going to recommend something that people could do to be safe on quads it would be to leave the liquor in the liquor cabinet," he said.

"The big risk group is males between 20 and 35, to be honest. They're all drunk and doing stupid stuff."

Calgary ATV Riders President Ken Spring said his group already mandates helmets and the legislation is "definitely positive."

"One thing that we do need more from our government is enforcement," Spring said.

Don Voaklander says 16 Albertans die in ATV accidents every year. COURTESY HONDA CANADA

How fast is the Bell network in Edmonton?

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(1) As ranked by PC Mag. Reprinted from www.pcmag.com with permission. © 2016 Ziff Davis, LLC. All Rights Reserved. (2) City comparison speeds based on Ookla's analysis of Speedtest Intelligence data from January 1 to March 31, 2017.

Clock ticking on NAFTA negotiations

TRADE

Talks to start as soon as possible, officials say

Canada says it's ready to talk now that U.S. President Donald Trump has formally launched the process to renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland said Thursday that Ottawa has already decided that updating the environment and labour sections of the trade pact will be two areas of focus going into the negotiations.

"I'm not going to lay all my cards on the table now. I don't think Canadians would like us to do that," Freeland said.

She noted that in letters to Congress to trigger the process for renegotiation, U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer also flagged those two areas, among others.

Lighthizer's notice to Congress Thursday set the clock ticking on the start of negotiations, saying they would begin as soon as possible but no later than 90 days.

In the letter, Lighthizer — who gave Canada advance notice of the move, according to Freeland — said that elements of the 25-year-old deal are "outdated" and "do not reflect modern standards."

Minister of Foreign Affairs Chrystia Freeland
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Lighthizer's letter set out some elements of the trade deal that the U.S. would like to see modernized, including intellectual property rights and regulatory practices.

Freeland said that Ottawa has a similar view and she tried to paint the renegotiation of the sweeping trade agreement as "routine."

The foreign affairs minister said the formal triggering of NAFTA talks has "long been anticipated" and said the federal government has already started to consult with Canadian stakeholders about Ottawa's priorities going into the talks.

Freeland declined to speculate about Washington's ambition to complete negotiations by the end of the year, saying any talk of timelines was "premature."

"What I will say is we are ready to roll up our sleeves — we have been from day one — and we will work hard and seriously on updating this essential agreement. At the end of the day, our objective is going to be to negotiate a great deal for Canadians, and I'm very confident we can do that," she said.

Lighthizer said that the United States seeks to support higher-paying jobs in the United States and to grow the U.S. economy by improving U.S. opportunities under NAFTA.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

> What I will say is we are ready to roll up our sleeves — we have been from day one. Chrystia Freeland

MANITOBA

Frostbitten asylum seeker who lost fingers given refugee status

Five months after nearly freezing to death on a treacherous walk across the Canada-U.S. border, and still learning to get along without the 10 fingers and thumbs he lost to frostbite, Seidu Mohammed is happy.

He gets to stay in Canada.

The Immigration and Refugee Board has granted Mohammed refugee status on the basis that the 24-year-old bisexual professional soccer player from Ghana would face persecution if returned to his home country.

"I feel so happy. I feel now that this country is my home now," he said Thursday, sitting at the kitchen table in his home.

With a bit of effort, he opened a binder and produced the written decision from the Immigration and Refugee Board.

"I want to do anything possible to contribute to this country because this country has done a lot to me that I didn't expect. Ever since I came here, I've seen a lot of good people who give me courage and also support me." THE CANADIAN PRESS

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CANADIANS LIVING WITH CROHN'S OR COLITIS NEED MORE OPTIONS

DESPITE ADVANCES IN INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE RESEARCH, TREATMENTS FOR PATIENTS REMAIN LIMITED

Sandra Zelinsky has spent the last 24 years trying to stay at least one step ahead of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). In that time, she's been on several medications, undergone several surgeries, and rode the ups and downs of living with a chronic disease that has a way of throwing new problems at you.

"A few of the medications have worked amazingly but most of them were unsuccessful. My disease state constantly evolves, and as it changes, so do my medical needs," says Zelinsky.

Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis, the two main forms of inflammatory bowel disease, cause the body to attack itself, leading to inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract. Because of that inflammation, people with IBD are left to face abdominal pain, cramps, bloating, fatigue, frequent and urgent bowel movements, internal bleeding, and unintended weight loss.

"In spite of the symptoms, people with IBD often look 'normal' on the outside," says Mina Mawani, President and CEO of Crohn's and Colitis Canada. "Canada in particular has some of the highest rates of inflammatory bowel disease in the world, and approximately 250,000 people across the country are living with Crohn's or colitis. You may know someone with the disease and not even know it."

There is no cure for Crohn's or colitis, but treatments can put the disease into remission, and patients can experience a reduction in their symptoms.

"Being in remission means we can live active, productive lives, and we can stay out of emergency rooms and avoid further surgeries," says Zelinsky, who now works as a patient engagement researcher, and who advocates for patient-centred care.

"Every case of IBD is unique, and each patient responds differently to different courses of treatment. To achieve remission, a patient may have to try multiple treatments before finding one that works for him or her. Each unsuccessful attempt means there's one less option available from an already limited number of treatments, and a treatment that works well for someone today could stop working tomorrow," says Mawani.

Having more and new options to choose from is integral to maintaining hope for continued remission. This is vital for people living with chronic diseases such as Crohn's and colitis.

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UN appeals for aid for 'Children on the Run'

REFUGEES

Campaign helps unaccompanied children from South America

With the number of unaccompanied and separated children fleeing gang violence in Central America doubling every year since 2011, the United Nations is launching a campaign to address the "urgent-yet-silent crisis."

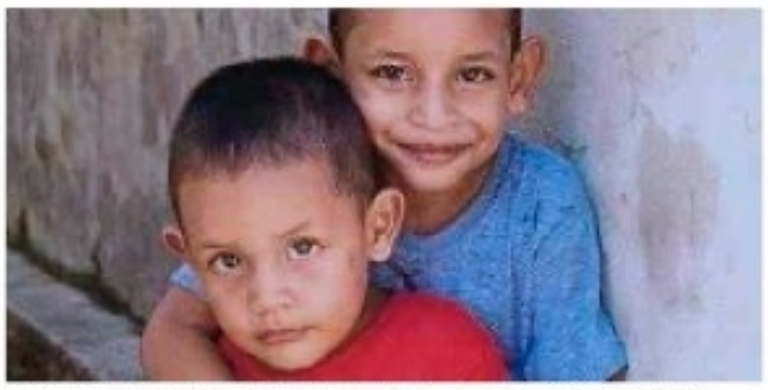
The UN Refugee Agency will kick off the "Children on the Run" campaign in North America on Friday to raise $18 million to assist the young refugees fleeing Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.

"We are very concerned about the forced recruitment of these children and youth into the gangs. These adolescents are sometimes killed, tortured and raped," said Jean-Nicolas Beuze, the agency's representative in Canada, who is working on a pilot with Ottawa to resettle a small number of the vulnerable children. According to the UN, the number of refugees from the Northern Triangle countries in the last four years has increased to 146,000 in 2016 from 20,900 in 2012.

Beuze said young refugees, many as young as 10 to 12 years old, often fall into the nets of traffickers and are sexually assaulted and exploited.

The UN Children on the Run campaign will focus on raising awareness of the growing number of children and families fleeing horrific violence in the three Central American countries through videos and stories on an information page on the crisis.

The fund will enable UN Refugee Agency to shelter and protect the vulnerable and facilitate family tracing, reunification and psychosocial support, but so far, said Beuze, only eight per cent of the needed money has been raised. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



Brothers Alejandro, 3, and Mateo, 5, and their family fled Honduras after a local gang threatened their lives. UNHCR

NEW YORK

Teen dies after car plows into Times Square crowd

Two law enforcement officials say a driver accused of running down pedestrians in Times Square told officers he was hearing voices and expected to die.

Authorities say Richard Rojas was taken into custody Thursday after mowing down 23 people, including a teenager who died.

The two law enforcement officials say Rojas tested negative for alcohol, but drug tests were still pending.

The officials weren't authorized to speak publicly and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

Police say the 26-year-old Navy veteran was arrested last week after he pointed a knife at a notary and accused the notary of stealing his identity.

It isn't clear when Rojas might get a lawyer.

Terrorism isn't suspected in the crash. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DIGEST

Trump slams 'witch hunt'
President Donald Trump denounced the appointment of special counsel Robert Mueller to investigate his campaign's ties with Russia Thursday, calling it a "witch hunt." Meanwhile, Republicans expressed hopes the move would restore calm to the capital. Lawmakers of both parties sought to question Mueller about Trump's firing of FBI director James Comey, followed by news that Trump had shared secrets with the Russians and tried to stop Comey from investigating former presidential adviser Michael Flynn. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Roger Ailes has died at 77
Roger Ailes, the communications maestro who transformed television news and America's political conversation by creating and ruling Fox News Channel for two decades before being ousted last year for alleged sexual harassment, died Thursday, according to his wife, Elizabeth Ailes. He was 77. Fox News and 21st Century Fox executive chairman Rupert Murdoch called Ailes "a brilliant broadcaster (who) played a huge role in shaping America's media." Others laid the nation's political dysfunction and inability to find common ground at his feet. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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1	6	4	3	9	2	8	7	5
5	2	8	4	1	7	6	3	9
7	1	6	9	4	8	2	5	3
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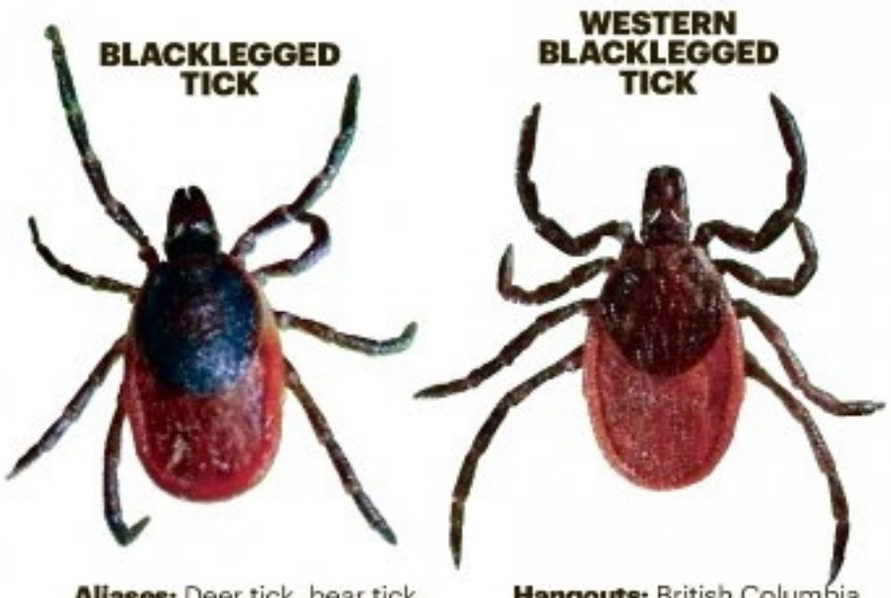
metro SCIENCE
Your essential daily news

Why do people with high IQs also tend to be atheists? Both groups are good at questioning their own instincts, a new Dutch study says

DECODED by Genna Buck and Andrés Plana

CANADA'S MOST UNWANTED

You can wear bug spray, long sleeves and even tuck your pants into your socks (cool!), but from now until fall, you or your pet could encounter ticks, and an even less welcome hitchhiker: Lyme disease. It spiked from 144 cases in 2009 to an estimated 841 in 2016. **And the warming climate means ticks are showing up in more places.**



Aliases: Deer tick, bear tick
Hangouts: Eastern and Central Canada
Crimes: Lyme disease, Deer Tick Virus Encephalitis, Babesiosis, many others

Hangouts: British Columbia and the U.S. Pacific Northwest
Crimes: Lyme disease, Human Granulocytic Anaplasmosis

THE ALBERTA EXCEPTION
Lyme is rare in Alberta, which is located in the sweet spot between blacklegged tick populations in Eastern and Western Canada. Just 34 ticks tested positive for the bacteria in the province in 2016.

WHAT LYME IS — AND ISN'T

IS: an illness caused by **Borrelia burgdorferi** bacteria

IS: treatable with antibiotics

IS: transmitted from birds and mammals to people via ticks

IS: usually spotted as a **"bulls-eye" rash** at the site of a tick bite

IS: a cause of fatigue, headache, chills, fever, muscle and joint pain, cardiac problems, facial paralysis and even meningitis

IS: a cause of painful arthritis and changes to personality, brain function and speech — if untreated

ISN'T: A chronic infection. Although symptoms can continue long after treatment, "chronic Lyme disease" is unproven. There's no benefit, but plenty of risks, to taking more antibiotics after the initial infection has cleared up.

SIZING UP TICKS

Ticks from the same species look different before and after eating and at different stages in the life cycle.

15mm — **Adults (after feeding)** look large and swollen: You won't miss it.

3-5mm — **Adults** burrow into skin, but you might not feel it because tick spit contains natural anesthetic.

2mm — **Nymphs** are most likely to transmit Lyme. They're tiny and hard to spot.

1mm — **Larvae** are miniscule baby ticks. They can harbour Lyme too.

NASTY NEIGHBOURS

These ticks aren't associated with Lyme, but can spread other infections

LONE STAR TICK : THE NEW TICK ON THE BLOCK This southern U.S. native is spreading to Canada as the climate warms. Its bite can induce a rare allergy to red meat.

AMERICAN DOG TICK
This plentiful tick hides out in grass, urban parks and trails in Central and Eastern Canada.

FINDINGS
Your week in science

FEDERAL FRAMEWORK
The government is set to release a framework for a national Lyme surveillance program this month along with guidelines and educational materials for health providers. The draft did not include references to the disputed "chronic Lyme disease," sparking protest from patient groups.

SOUND SMART

DEFINITION
Pedipalps are the two "arms" that spiders, scorpions and some crabs have on the front of their bodies.

USE IT IN A SENTENCE
There's a reason spiders make bad pop song writers. You try finding a rhyme for "I long to hold you in my **pedipalps**."

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Sci-fi thrillers are bursting back

The newly released Alien: Covenant is the latest of many film franchises to return to the big screen

Katherine Waterston joins a star-studded cast, including Michael Fassbender, Billy Crudup and Danny McBride for Alien: Covenant, in theatres now. CONTRIBUTED

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada

That's a lot of facehugging and chestbursting.

Since the 1979 release of Alien, a film Roger Ebert called "an intergalactic haunted house thriller set inside a spaceship," audiences have been fascinated with the sci fi/horror series.

The latest movie sees a new crew — including Michael Fassbender, Katherine Waterston, Billy Crudup and Danny McBride — on a mission to colonize planet Origae-6. Along the way they abandon their original course, choosing a closer, apparently inhabitable planet only to be met with terror and acid-spewing creatures.

Covenant is the third Alien movie directed by Ridley Scott. I once asked him what it was that kept him casting his eyes to the skies movie wise.

"The fantasy of space," he said, "which is now also a reality, is a marvellous platform and a form of theatre. Honestly, almost anything goes."

The freedom of the sci fi genre is a common theme among creators. Denis Villeneuve, whose sequel to Ridley Scott's Blade Runner, now titled Blade Runner 2019, comes out later this year, remembers how his mind was opened by his first exposure to the genre.

"At a very young age one of my aunts came home one night and she had brought two or three big cardboard boxes filled with magazines," says Villeneuve.

"Those magazines were all about sci fi. Those boxes changed my life because the amount of poetry and creativity among the guys that were drawing those comic strips. They were very strong storytellers. They were all like mad scientists playing with our brains."

A month before Alien: Covenant's opening date Scott announced plans to start shooting another sequel within the next fourteen months.

Until that one hits theatres what other sci fi films should we have a look at?

Vincenzo Natali, the director of episodes of television's Westworld and Orphan Black and adventurous films like Cube and Splice has some suggestions.

"I could mention 2001, Star Wars and The Matrix, but we've all been there. I think there are some very worthy science fiction films that aren't so well known."

First on his list is Stalker, from master director Andrei Tarkovsky.

"It's about a zone in Russia that may have had some kind of alien visitation and is highly classified. There are very special people called stalkers who illegally enter the zone and can take you to a place where your wishes can come true. No other movie ever made is quite like it. It is one of the most beautiful films I've ever seen."

Next up is The 10th Victim, a futuristic Marcello Mastroianni movie about a deadly televised game called The Big Hunt which becomes a replacement for all conflict on Earth, but at what cost? "An Italian film made in the '60s but way ahead of its time," he says.

"It's a satirical comedy, absolutely brilliantly made, filled with cool futuristic Italian design and it's really funny. I cannot recommend it enough."

Third is the animated La Planète Sauvage.

"It takes place on a planet where humans are pets for a race of large aliens. It's a kind of a Spartacus story against the aliens. Totally outrageous and very, very '70s."

MOVIE RATINGS by Richard Crouse

Alien: Covenant	★★
Diary of a Wimpy Kid	★★★
Chuck	★★★
The Lovers	★★★
Tommy's Honour	★★★

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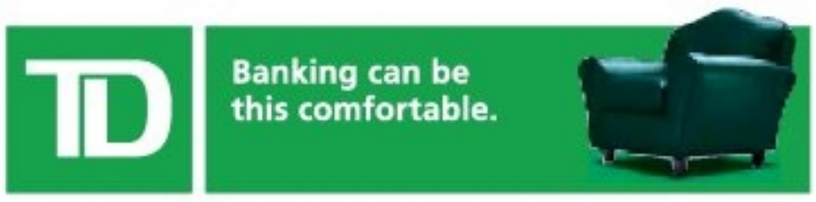

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'Sick-lit' a new genre of teen romance?

DRAMA

Love stories foiled by illness are on the rise in Hollywood

Steve Gow
For Metro Canada

There's a hot trend in pop culture right now and it's got nothing to do with crystal-infused water bottles, restorative nap cafés or even the latest Fitbit. No, I'm talking about the rise of the terminal romance.

Popularized by such young adult films as The Fault in Our Stars and smash Netflix series 13 Reasons Why, these books-turned-blockbusters backdrop budding teen romance against raw topics like illness or death.

"Kids are dealing with these things — whether or not we decide to talk about them," novelist Nicola Yoon said recently about the trend.

"I definitely feel a responsibility to be a part of that conversation but we can't pretend these things aren't happening."

Yoon's bestseller Everything, Everything is just the latest sobering story to see life on the big screen.

A tale about a teen with an extremely rare disease, Everything, Everything quarantines its protagonist inside her hermetically sealed home for her own safety. But when the handsome boy next door suddenly shows up, Maddy begins to risk her own health to join her would-be suitor.

"It's just very unique in the way its told," said director Stella Meghie of the inspiring novel.

"There's drawings and text messages, lists and recipes and it just has a certain whimsy and quirkiness to it but the romance is classic — it's Romeo and Juliet."

Not unlike the Shakespeare mainstay, Everything, Everything doesn't shy away from dark themes. But the rising trend of introducing such subjects as disease and death into young adult fiction has caused concern with some parents as well.

Nicknamed "sick-lit" by detractors, many say such content only romanticizes dark deeds and may provoke depression or other harmful acts among teens.

"Books don't create behaviours," defended If I Stay author Gayle Forman in Time Magazine. "What books can do, however, is reflect an experience and show a way out of difficult, isolating times" — a sentiment Yoon and Meghie certainly agree with.

"Kids are at such a pivotal stage of their life. I mean they're trying to figure out who they are, who they're going to be and they're trying to figure out how to be a good citizen of the world, asking themselves these big questions about the meaning of life," said Yoon. "These are great questions — adults should be asking them too."

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3 MORE TEEN TERMINAL ROMANCES

The Fault In Our Stars
John Green's bestseller-turned-blockbuster stars Shailene Woodley as a terminally ill teen who bonds with a boy from her cancer support group.

If I Stay
After a family car crash lands a girl in a deep coma, she has an out-of-body experience that forces her to decide between two fates — one of which is a budding romance.

13 Reasons Why
Jay Asher's novel has stirred up controversy with its Netflix adaptation that follows a teenager as he tries to uncover why his crush killed herself.

A tale about a teen with a rare disease, Everything, Everything quarantines its protagonist inside her hermetically sealed home. But when the handsome boy next door suddenly shows up, Maddy begins to risk her health to join her would-be suitor. CONTRIBUTED

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Chris Cornell, voice of rock, mourned by fans

OBITUARY

Lead singer of Soundgarden, Audioslave was an industry vet

Chris Cornell had become one of the most lauded and respected contemporary lead singers in rock music, thanks to his charismatic energy onstage and wide vocal range. He was a leader of the grunge movement with Seattle-based Soundgarden — with whom he gained critical and commercial acclaim — but also found success outside the band with other projects, including Audioslave, Temple of the Dog as well as solo albums.

His death Wednesday night stunned his family and his diehard fans, who Cornell had just performed for hours earlier at a show in Detroit.

Police said Thursday that the 52-year-old's death is being investigated as a possible suicide. A police spokesman told two Detroit newspapers that the singer was found with a band around his neck. An autopsy is being conducted Thursday and some information from it is expected to be released later in the day.

Known for his memorable voice and songwriting talent, Cornell was ranked ninth on Rolling Stone's 2011 list of the best lead singers of all time.

"To create the intimacy of an acoustic performance there needed to be real stories. They need to be kind of real and they need to have a beginning, middle and an end. That's always a challenge in three and a half or four minutes — to be able to do that, to be able to do it directly," Cornell said of songwriting in a 2015 interview with The Associated Press.

Cornell, who grew up in Seattle, said he was kicked out of school at age 15 and started using drugs at 13.

"I went from being a daily drug user at 13 to having bad drug experiences and quitting drugs by the time I was 14 and then not having any friends until the time I was 16," he told Rolling Stone in 1994.

But at 16 he became serious about music, learning to play the drums while also working as a busboy and dishwasher. "That was the toughest time in my life," he told Rolling Stone.

He eventually became a Grammy winner with Soundgarden, formed in 1984 and emerging from Seattle's blossoming music scene — which included Nirvana, Pearl Jam and Alice in Chains.

The band made a mainstream breakthrough with Superunknown, its 1994 album that launched five singles, won them two Grammys and sold more than five million units in the U.S. They broke up in 1997.

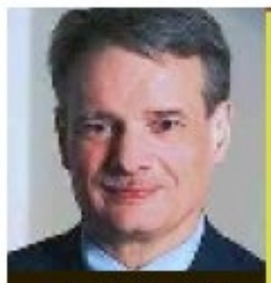
In 2001, Cornell joined Audioslave, a supergroup that included former Rage Against the Machine members Tom Morello, Brad Wilk and Tim Commerford. The band released three albums in six years before disbanding in 2007. Cornell and Soundgarden reunited in 2010 and released the band's sixth studio album, King Animal in 2012.

Nielsen Music said the singer sold almost 15 million albums and 8.8 million digital songs in the U.S.

The music industry mourned his sudden death online. Elton John tweeted, "Shocked and saddened by the sudden death of @chriscornell. A great singer, songwriter and the loveliest man."

"RIP Chris Cornell. Incredibly Talented. Incredibly Young. Incredibly Missed," Jimmy Page tweeted. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Police are investigating the musician's death as a possible suicide. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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FOREIGN FILM

Leviathan director's new film another bleak portrait of Russia

After his Oscar-nominated film Leviathan was deemed "anti-Russian" by Russia's Minister of Culture, director Andrey Zvyagintsev returned to the Cannes Film Festival with an equally bleak critique of Russian society.

Zvyagintsev was to premiere his fourth film, Loveless, on Thursday in Cannes, where Leviathan won best screenplay three years ago. That film, which also won a Golden Globe, was made with Russian state funding and prompted Russia's culture minister, Vladimir Medinsky, to refuse any further state financing for what he called Zvyagintsev's mix of "hopelessness and existential meaninglessness."

Loveless was instead made as an international co-production. The film is ostensibly about a bitterly divorcing couple (Mariana Spivak and Alexey Rozin), whose young son (Matvey Novikov) goes missing. But Loveless is also filled with state news reports and other sometimes subtle, sometimes blatant references that — as in Leviathan — suggest that Russia's politics have bankrupted its society.

"The Ministry of Culture went to great pains to emphasize how much they disliked Leviathan and their desire to avoid the repetition of this kind of mistake in the future," said producer Alexander Rodnyansky.

"After the uproar that Leviathan caused in Russia, I made a conscious decision to do this without any state involvement. I decided we didn't need to embarrass them again and to do the film on our own."

Grim and controlled, Loveless is initially focused on the relationships of its central characters. But Zvyagintsev steadily builds political subtext into the tale that, by the end, moves to the film's centre. State propaganda on Ukraine is heard on the radio and on TV. In one pivotal scene, the mother wears a jogging suit emblazed with "Russia" and the national colours.

Though it didn't immediately earn the same widespread praise as Leviathan, London's Daily Telegraph praised Loveless as "an opaque but pitiless critique on the director's native Russia."

Variety wrote: "Zvyagintsev can't come right out and declare, in bright sharp colours, the full corruption of his society, but he can make a movie like Leviathan, which took the spiritual temperature of a middle-class Russia lost in booze and betrayal, and he can make one like Loveless, which takes an ominous, reverberating look not at the politics of Russia but at the crisis of empathy at the culture's core."

In one unusual exchange Wednesday, a reporter accused Zvyagintsev of proffering his own propaganda.

"Certainly not," said Zvyagintsev. "If you saw Leviathan then you know where I stand vis-a-vis the powers that be. It's not supposed to be propaganda at all in this episode. You do see these scenes on TV. It's Russian life, Russian society, Russian anguish at the end of the day. But it's also universal, not just Russian."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

OSCARS AFTER BOYCOTT, IRANIAN DIRECTOR COLLECTS AWARD AT CANNES Asghar Farhadi, pictured with Lily-Rose Depp, has finally received his Oscar for best foreign language film, after boycotting the Academy Awards. He received the statuette during the opening ceremony at the Cannes Film Festival on Wednesday. Farhadi boycotted the ceremony in February over U.S. President Donald Trump's proposed travel ban on people from several majority-Muslim countries, including Iran. In his acceptance speech on Wednesday, Farhadi praised Cannes as a "place where cultures speak to one another." Farhadi won for The Salesman, the story of a married couple who performed Death of a Salesman on stage.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SPONSORED CONTENT — SENIOR LIFE

'EVERY DAY IS SENIOR'S DAY AT PANDA HUT EXPRESS'

Seniors can get a great deal on a delicious meal every day of the week at Panda Hut Express.

Panda Hut Express is now offering a dinner-for-two special, especially for seniors. The special comes with beef with stir fried veggie, sweet and sour pork, chicken fried rice and two chicken egg rolls for $19.99 before GST.

The same two meals would normally cost $34, says Panda Hut Express owner, Sunny Ng.

"Seniors deserve a better deal, that's why it's such a great price," says Ng. "Now seniors don't have to wait for Senior's Day because every day is Senior's Day at Panda Hut Express."

Panda Hut Express' senior's special is available for dine-in, take-out, and delivery orders for all customers 65 years old and over who make sure to mention the promotion when ordering.

Panda Hut Express also gives seniors 20 per cent off on all menu items every Wednesday as part of their weekly specials that include spicy chicken combos for $9.95 on Monday, rice and noodles for half price on Tuesday, and their delicious chicken satay for just $1.19 on Thursday.

The senior's special is available at both Panda Hut Express's north side location at 14204 118 Ave. and their south side location at 10879 23 Ave. NW.

CONTRIBUTED

Panda Hut Express also offers a full catering menu and daily delivery from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Go to pandahutexpress.net to see Panda Hut Express' full menu and place an order.

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Montana's magnificent ranges

EXPLORE

Find solitude and majesty in the Beartooth Wilderness

Crawl from your warm sleeping bag out the tent door, into the darkness and pre-dawn wind whipping across the plateau. Look up at the cathedral of the sky. Watch the whirlpool of constellations spin overhead.

It's hard not to feel vertigo in the majesty of Montana's wilderness. Whether you seek the rocky heights of a 3,000-metre peak or an endless chain of lakes, the pastels of a mountain meadow or the catch of day (here it's trout), you'll find it here in one of the state's most magnificent ranges, the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness.

This 42-kilometre trail cuts through one of the state's most majestic ranges. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The best way to get in there is the Beaten Path, a 42-kilometre trail that climbs up and over the Gallatin National Forest watershed divide. The trail has a reputation for high foot and horse traffic, but in the five days we backpacked through last summer, my hiking partner and I saw just a handful of others and embraced the solitude.

The trailhead sits at the southeastern edge of East Rosebud Lake. Accessible by car from the north via a 22-kilometre road from Roscoe.

However, we accessed the path via Red Lodge, a tourist town east of the wilderness that serves as the jumping-off point for the Beartooth Highway, a breathtaking drive that climbs to 3,352 metres while winding along the Wyoming border. Much of the valley and surrounding ridgeline is a moonscape of charred timber and ash on the forest floor, the result of an intense 2008 fire.

Climbing north out of the river valley and onto the Red Lodge Creek plateau, our boots were grey and dusty by the time we reach tree line. Up to 3,000 metres then down off the ridge, we camped on the marshy shores of Crow Lake, hemmed in by a seam of serrated peaks that turned crimson at sunset.

The following day, we climbed out of the valley and crossed an amber meadow carpet, then descended a dusty switchback to arrive at East Rosebud Lake and the beginning of the north end of the Beaten Path.

The path wound south, past one lake after another, following East Rosebud Creek as it drains north. The fishermen we passed carrying trout in plastic bags provided reassurance that even novice anglers like ourselves could catch something. At Elk Lake that night, we did not.

One of the beauties of the Montana alpine terrain is how easy it is to wander. One night, we bushwhacked off trail, upstream to Echo Lake. Pika Peak, named for the small, furry rodents we saw occasionally darting along the trail, was bathed in a tangerine sunset, and we were astounded that, literally, with every cast of our reel, we pulled in brook trout well in excess of a foot. Pan-fried trout for dinner and for breakfast.

After being baked red by the sun for three days, we welcomed the wind but not the spitting snow and hail. We bundled up for our descent.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NOTICE OF HEARING FOR:
PERMANENT GUARDIANSHIP ORDER TO:

Kyle REID

Take notice that on the **05th day of June, 2017 at 9:30 a.m.,** a hearing will take place in **Courtroom Number 441 Law Courts Building, 1a Sir Winston Churchill Square, Edmonton, Alberta.**

A Director, under the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act will make an application for **Permanent Guardianship Order** of your child born on **November 9, 2016.** You are requested to be present at the hearing. You have the right to be represented by legal counsel. An Order may be made in your absence, and you have the right to appeal the Order within 30 days from the date the Order is made.

Contact: Alysha YOUNG
Edmonton and Area Child and Family Services
TELEPHONE NUMBER: 780-408-7192

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Gather information and share your opinions at an Elk Island National Park Open House regarding options to ensure a healthy population of bison, moose, elk and deer in the park. Sustainable ungulate populations is important to ensuring a healthy ecosystem in the park. Your input into these options is valued. Light refreshments served.

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May 25, 2017 - 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
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June 1, 2017 - 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Alfred H. Savage Centre
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Le 1er juin 2017 de 18 h 30 à 20 h 30
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Canada

SPORTS
Your essential daily news
Weekend, May 19-22, 2017

McGregor signs up to fight Floyd

NOTORIOUS M & M

Mayweather must now agree to terms for bout to happen

Conor McGregor has never boxed professionally before but is the UFC's biggest star. GETTY IMAGES

Conor McGregor has come to an agreement with the UFC that has moved a proposed fight with Floyd Mayweather Jr. closer to reality.

UFC president Dana White said he reached a deal with McGregor, MMA's biggest star and lightweight champion, and will now start negotiations on a mega fight with the retired Mayweather that could be worth $1 billion.

"I'm not saying the fight will happen, but I've got one side done. Now it's time to work on the other," White said.

McGregor confirmed the contract for the boxing match in a statement to Themaclife.com.

"The first, and most important part of this historic contract has now officially been signed off on," McGregor said. "Congratulations to all parties involved. We now await Al Haymon and his boxer's signature in the coming days."

> **The first, and most important part of this historic contract has now officially been signed off on.**
> Conor McGregor

White and McGregor did not announce specifics of the deal.

"If we can come to a deal with Haymon and Mayweather, the fight's gonna happen," White said.

Mayweather was in London this week and told reporters he would end his nearly two-year retirement for what could be the richest payday in fight history.

"There's only one fight that makes business sense," Mayweather said. "I came out of retirement because I'm a businessman and I want to give the world what they want to see. McGregor's a fighter. I'm a fighter. This is what the fight fans and MMA fans want to see."

The 40-year-old Mayweather, one of the great pound-for-pound fighters who retired at 49-0 in 2015, has said he'd want the fight to be at either 147 or 150 pounds and be part of a Showtime pay-per-view package.

McGregor, 28, hasn't fought since he defeated Eddie Alvarez at UFC 205 in November 2016. He has no scheduled UFC fights ahead.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Spurs go off on Leicester
Harry Kane scored four goals in Tottenham's 6-1 rout of Leicester on Thursday.

Son Heung-min became the highest-scoring South Korean player in a European season scoring twice to reach 21 goals and break Cha Bum-kun's 19-goal haul at Bayer Leverkusen. Leicester manager Craig Shakespeare will find out if he will keep his job soon.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gaviria wins long Giro stage
Colombian rider Fernando Gaviria won a bunch sprint at the end of the longest stage of the Giro d'Italia on Thursday to earn his third win in his first Grand Tour.

Gaviria, who rides for Quick-Step Floors, edged Italian rival Jakub Mareczko at the end of the 229-kilometre route from Forli to Reggio Emilia. Overall, Holland's Tom Dumoulin is the leader.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Olympics '18 head 'willing to co-operate' with NHL
The head of the Pyeongchang Olympics organizing committee said Thursday that the NHL isn't being "greedy" preventing hockey stars going to the 2018 Games and he was willing to be flexible to meet its demands.

Organizing committee president Lee Hee-beom said on Thursday that "we are ready to co-operate." The best players have played in every Olympics since 1998.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MAKE IT TONIGHT

Luscious Rhubarb and Plum Crumble

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

Catch the end of rhubarb season with this luscious dessert.

Ready in 1 hour
Prep time: 30 minutes
Cook time: 30 minutes
Serves 8

Ingredients
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 3/4 cup rolled oats
- 1/2 cup + 2 Tbsp brown sugar
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/3 cup pecans, chopped
- 1/2 cup butter, melted
- 3 1/2 cups of chopped, pitted plums
- 2 cups chopped rhubarb
- 1/3 cup + 2 Tbsp maple syrup
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- 1 Tbsp flour

Directions
1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Toss together the flour, oats, 1/2 cup of brown sugar, cinnamon, salt and nuts until everything is well combined.
3. In a small bowl, mix together melted butter and 2 Tbsp maple syrup. Pour over the oat mixture and stir until it becomes evenly moist. Set aside.
4. Place your chopped plums and rhubarb, lemon juice, 1/3 cup of maple syrup, 2 Tbsp brown sugar and flour in a bowl and give it a good toss. Pour fruit into an 8" x 8" baking pan. Top with crumble. Don't worry if it doesn't cover the fruit perfectly.
5. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes until the topping is golden brown and the fruit is bubbling. Allow to cool for a few minutes before serving.

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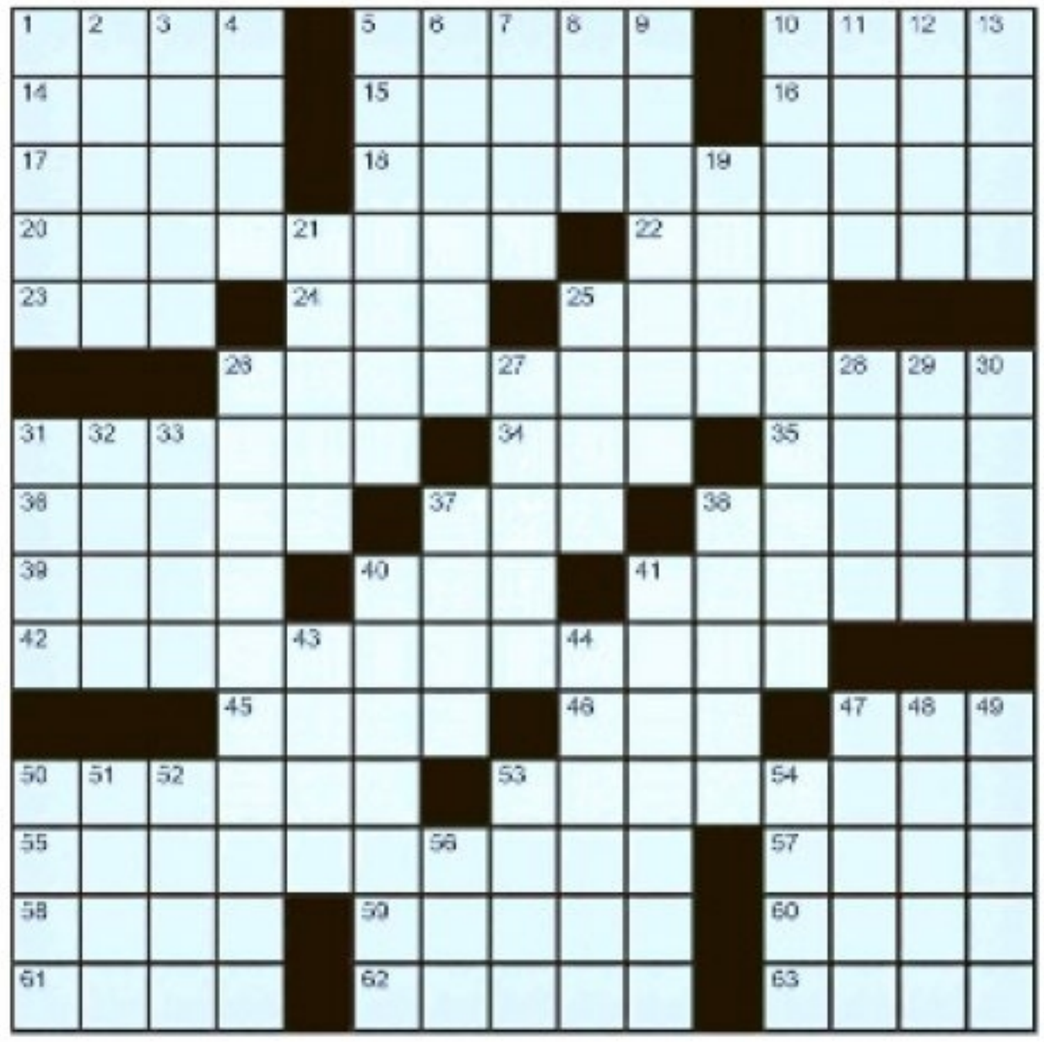
CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Mr. Klugman of "Quincy, M.E."
5. Cashier-to-customers papers [abbr.]
10. Queen Victoria's is May 24th, briefly
14. Cosmetics giant
15. "Star Trek" character
16. Laugh: French
17. Enthusiasm
18. Popular pair of pants: 2 wds.
20. Journalistic output, often, to President Donald Trump: 2 wds.
22. Make a money plan
23. Years: French
24. "Could __ Your Girl" by Jann Arden
25. Actress, Candace Cameron __
26. Juno-winning country star from Nova Scotia: 2 wds.
31. Bequest
34. Grassland
35. "There will __ talking in class!"
36. Singer Ms. Cara
37. Soaked
38. "Desperately Seeking __" (1985)
39. Sud's directional opposite
40. Fashion scarf
41. 7UP rival
42. Canadian production on Broadway which has seven Tony Award nominations for this year's 2017 broadcast on June 11th: 3 wds.
45. Racetrack fence
46. Convened
47. Entrepreneur's deg.
50. Travels around a planet
53. Those driving too fast
55. Central thoroughfare in Winnipeg: 2 wds.
57. Beehive State
58. Editor's 'let it stand'
59. Place to connect in Chicago
60. Zero, in tennis
61. Mr. Malden
62. Oscar-winner Sophia
63. Diving bird

DOWN
1. Orange variety
2. Bird-related
3. Wine bottle toppers
4. Leg-bending point
5. 2010 Rihanna chart-topper: 2 wds.
6. Grub grinder
7. Wordplays
8. Numerical prefix
9. Liqueur of Italy
10. Rural town in Saskatchewan west of the Manitoba border
11. Hor. Vert. __. (Abbreviated lines)
12. "Rule, Britannia" composer
13. Fri., on Sat.
19. __ Mountains (Switzerland-France range)
21. Bridget Fonda, to Jane
25. __ juice
26. Newfoundland airport where planes on 9/11 were diverted (What the musical at #42-Across is about): wd. + abbr.
27. Sparkle
28. "__, _ can." (Can-do attitude reply)
29. Go __ __ great length
30. Zippo
31. Rival car of a Cadillac, for short
32. 'Switch' suffix
33. Wheat __
37. Sheep coat fabric
38. Outpouring
40. "__ Stomp": 1961 hit for The Dovells
41. Make more sugary
43. '50s singer Mr. Domino
44. Unit of electric current
47. "Ditto over here!": 2 wds.
48. "Clap! Clap! Clap!"
49. Drained looking
50. City of Russia
51. Pro __ (In proportion)
52. Casket stand
53. Singe
54. Boring
56. Greek alphabet's 17th letter

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
You feel warm and generous to everyone today, which is why this is a great day to schmooze with partners and close friends. Have a good time, but don't go overboard.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
You feel content today. You're happy in your own skin. Things are coming your way and work looks hopeful!

Gemini May 22 - June 21
This is a popular day! Enjoy interactions with others, whether they are casual friendships or dealings with groups and organizations. People want to see you today.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
You make a fabulous impression on bosses, parents and VIPs today. Just be careful you don't promise more than you can deliver. Remain realistic.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Big travel plans are thrilling. You want to go places and enjoy things in Leo style!

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
If you have to share or divide something today, don't give away the farm. Remember that you have rights, too. Respect your own self-interest.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You feel warm and friendly toward everyone today, which is why you will be tempted to go overboard or make promises that you cannot fulfill.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
This is a day full of self-indulgence. You might overeat and enjoy seconds on dessert, but you will feel guilty because you also have an eye on your health.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
This definitely is a party day — and you are the sign who likes to work hard and party hard! Enjoy good times with friends, sporting events and playful activities with children.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You will love to entertain at home today. In particular, you will love to show your guests a good time.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
This is a fun-loving day; and you're in a great mood. You will enjoy the company of others, and you also will enjoy the beauty of your daily surroundings. It's a fortunate day, indeed!

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Look for ways to boost your income, because they do exist today. However, you also might overspend on something because it's easy to go overboard today. Ka-ching!

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

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Rohit LAND DEVELOPMENT

Rachel Hession and Dean Clark of Avalon Master Builders walk buyers through design decisions, introduce them to their home's features and provide support for the first year. CONTRIBUTED

Making your new house your own

BUILDER SERVICES

Experts help buyers turn a house into a happy home

Miles Durrie

Once you've worked with a sales person and decided to buy your new home, there are plenty of details to work out before you move in. That's where Dean Clark and Rachel Hession come in.

"I'm their first contact once they've made the decision to buy and the conditions of sale have been removed," says Clark, the design and selections manager for Avalon Master Builder.

As his title suggests, Clark helps turn houses and multi-family units into personalized homes, guiding buyers through the process of choosing design options, paint colours, fixtures and all the other selections that need to be made.

"It's ironing out all the fine details in their homes," he says. "At different construction milestones I'll bring them through and explain how their home is built. It can be a lot of fun."

Clark will also check in on the construction process regularly himself. After he has worked with buyers to put together their ideal living space and set their possession date, it's Hession's turn.

Her role as service and warranty team lead for Avalon means it's her job to introduce customers to their new home and all its features.

"I'll give them a call and meet with them for their walkthrough," Hession says. "We'll go through processes, what to do in an emergency, all the controls: 'Here's where everything is and here's how it all works.'"

She'll also confirm that everything is the way the buyers wanted it, and identify any areas that might need a touchup.

After the new homeowners move in, Hession continues to support them, answering questions, solving problems and arranging for any work that's needed during the one-year warranty period.

"It's rewarding, having that sense that I'm the person a lot of people count on for support for the first year," she says. "It's humbling to be able to help."

Clark, a Saskatoon native who started his career in the motorsports industry, has been with Avalon for seven years. He says first-time homebuyers in particular are often worried they might make the wrong decisions.

"You get to work with them and put their anxiety at ease, and improve their outlook," he says. "Part of it is knowing the questions to ask."

Hession was born and spent her early childhood near Cardiff, Wales, coming to Alberta as a pre-teen. She recently marked her fifth year with Avalon after starting her career working for a building materials supplier.

Recently engaged, she's currently pursuing a business diploma at SAIT.

Hession and Clark agree that meeting people and helping them through their first year of home ownership and beyond is a reward in itself.

"It's good for the buyers to know there are people like us to help them with every aspect of the home," Hession says. "It's kind of neat that we get to do that."

> **It's good for the buyers to know there are people like us to help them with every aspect of the home. It's kind of neat that we get to do that.**
>
> Rachel Hession, service and warranty team lead for Avalon Master Builder

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